



# Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

## **Joint Executive Council for Veterans Organizations (JECVO) Update**

October 2, 2019

Update presented by

Commissioner Benjamin F. Adams, III

Brigadier General, US Army (Ret)



# Agenda

- Veterans Benefits Branch
- State Veteran Centers (Nursing Homes)
- State Veteran Cemeteries
- Homeless Veterans Program
- Women Veterans Program
- KyVETS Program
- Veterans Program Trust Fund
- Funding Priorities
- Legislative Update
- Major Events



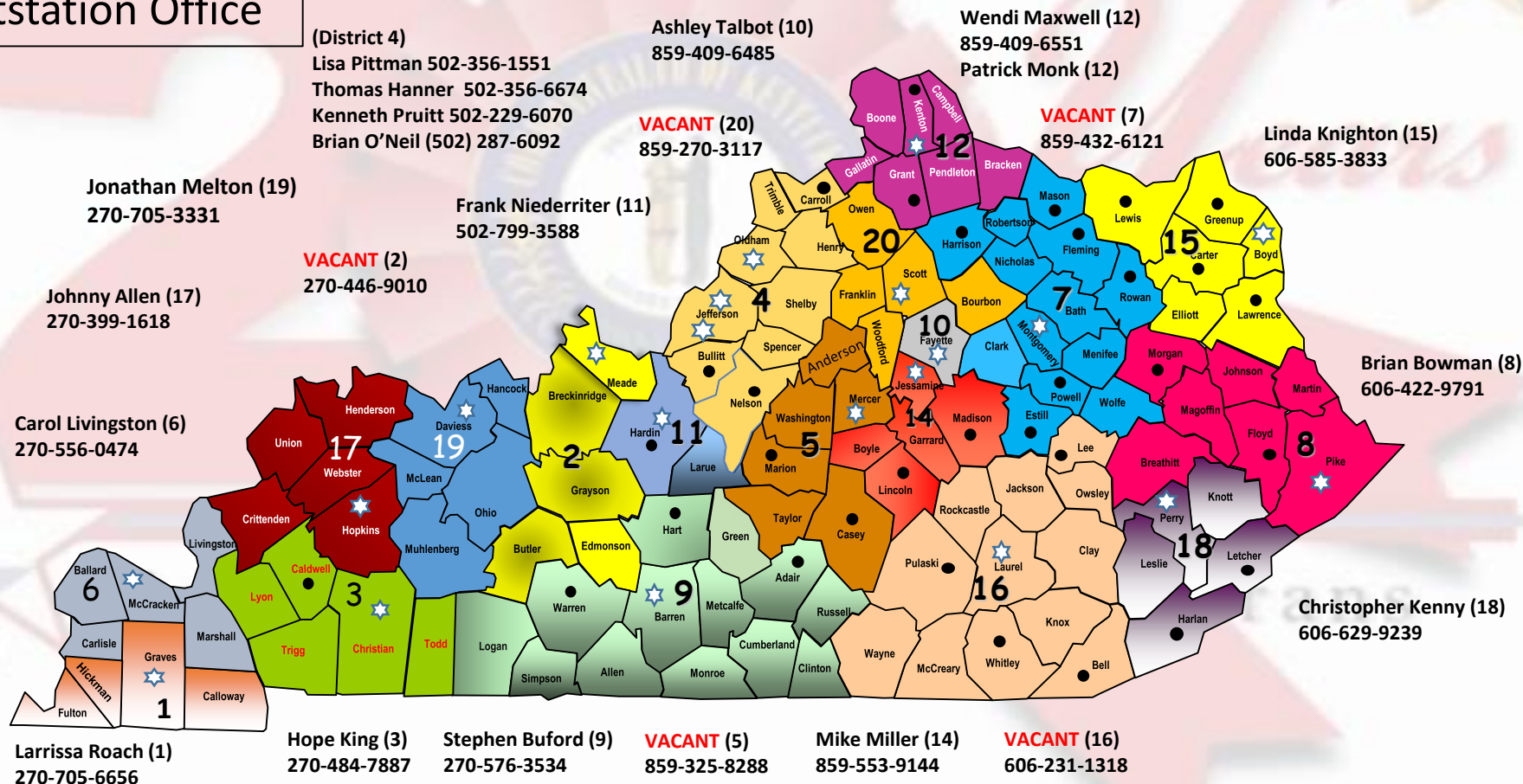
*2 Years*

*Serving Kentucky's Veterans*

# Benefits Branch Field Offices

22 Field Representatives in 19 Districts

- ☆ Primary Office
- Outstation Office



Revised 30 September 2019



# Veteran Centers

As of 1 October 2019



**Thomson-Hood Veterans Center, Wilmore, KY  
(Jessamine County)**

168/285 = 59% (+ 1% since last meeting)  
Opened in 1991



**Western Kentucky Veterans Center, Hanson, KY  
(Hopkins County)**

89/156 = 57% -1% since last meeting)  
Opened in 2002



**Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center, Hazard, KY  
(Perry County)**

113/120 = 94% (+2% since last meeting)  
Opened in 2013



**Radcliff Veterans Center, Radcliff KY  
(Hardin County)**

73/120 = 60% (+1% since last meeting)  
Opened in 2017



# Veterans Cemeteries

As of 1 October 2019

**KVCW, Hopkinsville, Christian County, KY**



Opened March 1, 2004

Interments:

Veterans	3,265
Dependents	<u>1,213</u>
Total	4,478
Cremated	1,302

**KVCC, Radcliff, Hardin County, KY**



Opened June 1, 2007

Interments:

Veterans	5,260
Dependents	<u>1,305</u>
Total	6,565
Cremated	2,056

**KVCN, Williamstown, Grant County, KY**



Opened Aug 22, 2008

Interments:

Veterans	1,501
Dependents	<u>337</u>
Total	1,838
Cremated	711

**Total: 14,036**

**KVCNE, Grayson, Greenup County, KY**



Opened October 1, 2010

Interments:

Veterans	916
Dependents	<u>207</u>
Total	1,123
Cremated	342

**KVCSE, Hyden, Leslie County, KY**



Opened May 1, 2018

Interments:

Veterans	28
Dependents	<u>4</u>
Total	32
Cremated	11





# Homeless Veterans Program

- Provides onetime direct financial assistance up to **\$500 (\$750 maximum)** to veterans facing eviction/utility cut off or to assist with temporary housing.
- Directs homeless veterans and their families to appropriate federal, state and local agencies to assist with transient housing, food, clothing, and employment assistance.
- Assists homeless veterans and those at risk, file for VA benefits, healthcare, and pensions as appropriate.
- KDVA is major supporter of Operation Victory in Louisville. Two homes rehabilitated and provided to homeless veterans in the past two years.
  - The third Operation Victory home on Parthenia Ave is expected to be completed in October.
  - Operation Victory will begin construction on the forth home as soon as Parthenia Ave project is completed.
  - Accepting applications from homeless veterans for the next 3 homes through Operation Victory.
- Homeless Veteran Program Coordinator is Eileen Ward,  
(502) 782-5730, email [eileen.ward@ky.gov](mailto:eileen.ward@ky.gov)



# Homeless Veterans Program

## Financial Assistance

### **FY 2019 (1 Jul 18-30 Jun 19)**

Total assistance paid out	\$62,457.65
Avg. per veteran	\$243.98

Veterans assisted with Housing	131
Veterans assisted with Utilities	<u>125</u>
Total veterans assisted	256

### **FY 2020 (1 Jul 19 to Present)**

Total assistance paid out	\$36,450.63
Avg. per veteran	\$396.20

Veterans assisted with housing	58
Veterans assisted with Utilities	<u>34</u>
Total veterans assisted	92



# Women Veterans Program

- Email address  
[women.veterans@ky.gov](mailto:women.veterans@ky.gov)
- Women Veterans' Town Hall Meeting:
  - We are seeking feedback on women veterans' issues in preparation for a future women veterans' conference 2020
  - We will publish several dates for Town Hall meetings
- Please share any women veterans events with KDVA for us to post on our web page and social media.
- **Seeking Women Veterans Coordinator while LuWanda Knuckles is on active military duty.**
- Acting Women Veterans Program Coordinator April Brown, cell 502-234-4854, email [april.brown@ky.gov](mailto:april.brown@ky.gov)





# “Have You Served” Outreach Campaign

*Something New*

**Goal:** Reach the thousands of women veterans in Kentucky who are not seeking benefits and services because they don't think of themselves as “veterans.”

**Action:** Enlist state and local government agencies and non-profit organizations to ask their clients for veterans information. Provide to these partners promotional materials for KDVA's “Have You Served” campaign. Offer educational briefings to agency heads, elected officials, PIOs, etc., on why “Have You Served” is a more effective and accurate question than “Are You a Veteran?”

KDVA's work brings hundreds of millions of dollars into Kentucky every year through veteran benefits. Those benefits are direct transfers from the federal government to veterans and their families. Every veteran we reach for whom we can obtain benefits is a net increase in revenue for the Commonwealth.

Every veteran we fail to reach – especially women veterans – is a veteran not served by KDVA.



# Employment Support Program

## KyVets Veteran Services:

- Resume review and update
- Referral to employers
- Referral to other resources
- Education & Training
- HireKy website & App (<https://login.bfacmobile.com/m/hireky>)

Kentucky  
Veteran  
Employment,  
Training, and  
Support  
(KyVets)

## KyVets Employer Services:

- Education on why hiring veterans is good business
- Matching veterans skills and experience to employer needs
- Free advertisement of positions
- Top talent referrals
- HireKy website & App (<https://login.bfacmobile.com/m/hireky>)



KyVETS Program Coordinator is April Brown

(502) 782-5735, email [april.brown@ky.gov](mailto:april.brown@ky.gov) or [kyvets@ky.org](mailto:kyvets@ky.org)

# Veterans Program Trust Fund

- The Veterans Program Trust Fund (VPTF) supports many veteran programs and projects throughout Kentucky but for which other funds are not available.
- The VPTF is overseen by a Board of Directors appointed by the Governor. The board meets several times per year.
- The VPTF receives a steady stream of revenue from a \$5 fee that is associated with the initial purchase and annual renewal of Veteran and Military License Plates, as well as tax deductible contributions from private and corporate donors.

## Last Meeting 18 September 2019

- 7 Grant Applicants
  - 7 Grants Approved
- Total Obligated \$119,500.00

## Next Meeting 8 January 2020

- 8 Grant Application Slots
- Deadline for submitting grant applications is 9 December 2019





# Funding Priorities for 2020-2022

1. \$480K to fund Nurse Student Loan Repayment Program (GS19 HB 296)
2. \$25M to fund competitive salaries for Nursing Staff
3. \$2M to fund 20 additional Benefit Reps
4. \$200K to fund Homeless Veterans Program (Executive Branch Budgetary Request)
5. \$2.5M to fund design work on Bowling Green Veterans Center Project (BR 125)

Serving Kentucky's Veterans



# Veterans Legislation 2019 Enacted

- **HB 296**: Creates a student loan repayment program for registered nurses and licensed practical nurses who will be employed by KDVA
- **HB 323**: Grants occupational license reciprocity to members of the reserve, National Guard, veterans, and their spouses
- **HB 338**: Gives interview preference for state jobs to service members and their families
- **SB 55**: Adds a veterans-at-risk "Green Alert" to the "Golden Alert" System
- **HB 243**: Requires Kentucky State Police to provide personal protection to Kentucky Medal of Honor recipients at public events and ceremonies
- **HB 316**: Allows service members who receive official orders requiring relocation to terminate or suspend select services without penalty or fee
- **HB 356**: Allows service members, spouses and dependents to maintain residency status after being accepted or enrolled in a Kentucky public postsecondary institution, if the service member receives official orders to relocate
- **HB 399**: Allows military families moving into the state on official orders to pre-enroll their children in a school district before obtaining an address



# Legislative Priorities for 2020

1. Exempt Military Retired Pay and Survivor Benefits from State Income Tax to make KY competitive with surrounding states.
2. Exempt Veteran Service Organizations from property tax. (BR 127/BR 247)
3. Bowling Green Veterans Center, design and preconstruction. (BR 125)
4. Allow certification as a Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) by the US Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) for verification and evaluation who meet the criteria of veteran eligibility, ownership, and control.
5. Clarify eligibility for a special military license plate and provide for a special military license plate for spouses of veterans.
6. Allow veterans who are paid at the 100 percent rate for service-connected disabilities by the USDVA to purchase disabled veteran license plates with no initial fee or renewal fee.
7. Amend KRS 132.810 to expand the homestead exemption in the Constitution to include surviving un-remarried spouses of totally disabled veterans of the United States Armed Forces.
8. Designate the Honor and Remember flag as the state's emblem of the service and sacrifice of the men and women of the US Armed Forces who have given their lives in the line of duty. (BR 85)





# Major Events

**October 5, 2019 1500 (Central Time)**

Interment of SFC Jeremy Wayne Griffin (Afghanistan KIA)

Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West

Hopkinsville, KY

**October 8, 2019**

Lexington Veterans Commission Meeting

Village Branch Library

2185 Versailles Road, Lexington, KY

**November 3-11, 2019**

Week of Valor events and activities

Lexington & Louisville

**October – November 2019 (Date TBD)**

Groundbreaking Ceremony for Kentucky Gold Star Families Memorial Monument

Capitol, Frankfort, KY

**June 12-13, 2020**

Veterans Engagement Action Center (VEAC)

One-stop shop for Veteran Benefits, Counseling, and Services

Lexington Christian Academy

450 W. Reynolds Road, Lexington, KY



# Questions

Contact us at



[www.veterans.ky.gov](http://www.veterans.ky.gov)



Kentucky Department of Veteran Affairs



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(502) 564-9203